

AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT

Please replace the Abstract with the following:

A connecting device for the pivotal and loss-prevention joining of an actuating lever (1) and a support element (6) of a valve operating mechanism of a combustion engine. The actuating lever (1) has, in a supporting section (3), a spherical cap-shaped cavity (5) inside of which the spherical end (7) of the supporting element (6) may be placed. A recess and/or undercut (8) is formed underneath the spherical end (7) in the supporting element (6). The actuating lever (1) has, in the supporting section (3), a spherical upper surface (4) above the spherical cap-shaped cavity (5). A securing element (9) joins the actuating lever (1) and the supporting element (6) to one another. This securing element (9) has a U-shaped cross-sectional shape with an upper and a lower limb (10, 11) that are joined to one another via a joining section (12). Geometrically closed openings (13, 14) for accommodating the recess (8) of the supporting element (6) or the spherical upper surface (4) of the supporting section (3) of the actuating lever (1) are made in both limbs (10, 11). The opening (13) in the upper limb (10) is essentially round, and the opening (14), which is located in the lower limb (11) while being assigned to the supporting element (6), is provided, in essence, in the form of a slot.